

CLAIMS

1. A cards safe for securing credit cards, identity cards, and the like, in an establishment such as a hotel, a golf course, a pub or a bar or some other establishment that provides a service or a product that requires a security payment or a deposit as security prior to sale, use, hire or disposal of the product or service, wherein the safe comprises compartments for such cards, so that the cards provide the deposit or security, the cards safe being adapted such that access to the contents of a particular compartment is exclusively at the control of the consumer using that compartment by means of a lock and a key, wherein each compartment comprises a unique key for retention by the customer when using the cards safe.
2. The cards safe of claim 1, wherein the cards safe is adapted to be attached to a wall by a securement means.
3. The cards safe of claim 2, wherein the securement means comprises screws or bolts.
4. The cards safe of claim 1, ~~claim 2 or claim 3~~, wherein the lock is adapted to lock a compartment upon removal of the key for that compartment from the cards safe.
5. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the lock is adapted to unlock a compartment upon inserting the key for that compartment into the cards safe.
6. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, claim 1 wherein each compartment comprises its own self-contained lock.
7. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, claim 1 wherein each compartment comprises a slot therein for the key for that compartment.

8. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, claim 1 wherein the cards safe is small enough to fit on a shelf or service counter at the establishment.
9. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, claim 1 wherein the cards safe is no bigger than 40cm by 40cm by 20cm.
10. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, claim 1 wherein each compartment is adapted to be able to retain a single credit card therein.
11. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, claim 1 wherein each compartment is no bigger than 15cm by 10cm by 3cm.
12. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, claim 1 wherein there are ten compartments.
13. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, claim 1 wherein the cards safe comprises at least two boxes and a box storage means for storing the boxes, each box forming one of the compartments and being removable from the box storage means.
14. The cards safe of claim 13, wherein the box storage means comprises a rack for multiple boxes.
15. The cards safe of claim 13 ~~or claim 14~~, wherein the box storage means has a secondary locking mechanism for locking the boxes in the box storage means.
16. The cards safe of claim 15, wherein the secondary locking mechanism comprises a locking bar running down a side of the boxes.
17. The cards safe of claim 16, wherein a slot for the locking bar is provided in a side of each box.

18. The cards safe of claim 17, wherein two opposed sides of each box each comprise a slot for a locking bar.

19. The cards safe of claim 18, wherein, the box storage means comprises two locking bars.

20. The cards safe of ~~any one of claims 13 to 19,~~ claim 13 wherein each box comprises runners on two opposed sides thereof, the runners being adapted to run in opposed recesses in the sides of the box storage means.

21. The cards safe of claim 20, ~~when dependent upon claim 16,~~ wherein the or each locking bar comprises one or more notch through which the runners of a box can pass when the or each locking bar is moved from a locked position to an unlocked position.

22. The cards safe of claim 21, wherein the or each locking bar comprises multiple notched spaces at distances apart that correspond to the distances apart that adjacent recesses are placed, and wherein the or each locking bar can be moved from a locked position to an unlocked position by depressing or lifting the locking bar a distance smaller than that distance.

23. The cards safe of any one of ~~claims 13 to 22,~~ claim 13 wherein each box comprises a top part, a bottom part and a middle part in the form of a slide, wherein the slide has a tray for receiving a credit card, the slide being adapted to slide between an open position in which the card can be placed on the tray and a closed position in which the slide is between the top and bottom part, the top and bottom parts forming a case around the middle part such as to prevent access to the tray and the card in the closed position.

24. The cards safe of claim 23, wherein the tray comprises a frame sized to fit closely around the perimeter of a card. Preferably the card is a credit or debit card.

25. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims,~~ claim 1 wherein the lock for each compartment comprises a locking mechanism comprising a rockable locking arm with guides thereon, and grooves for the guides to slide in only when they are correctly aligned with the grooves, wherein the key for the compartment is adapted to correctly align the guides.
26. The cards safe of claim 25, wherein the guides are at two ends of the locking arm.
27. The cards safe of claim 25 ~~or 26,~~ wherein there are two locking arms for each compartment.
28. The cards safe of claim 25, ~~claim 26 or claim 27,~~ wherein the or each locking arm is biased out of a correctly aligned orientation.
29. The cards safe of ~~any one of the preceding claims,~~ claim 1 wherein the compartments or the cards safe prevent reading devices from being able to penetrate the exterior walls of the compartments such that they cannot read the information on cards contained in the compartments.
30. A system for securing two parties, the system comprising a cards safe as defined in ~~any one of the preceding claims,~~ claim 1, the cards safe being in a retail or service providing establishment, the two parties comprising a consumer for the establishment and either the establishment itself or a seller of the establishment, wherein the system provides for the placing of a security or a deposit at the establishment by the consumer, the system requiring the consumer to lock a card, such as a credit card or identity card, in a compartment of the cards safe and, in return for the consumer to retain the key for that container, whereby the establishment or seller retains the card as the security or deposit but without having access to the card, other than by forceful means.

31 - 36 (Cancelled)